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THE REPUBLIC OF THE UPPER VOLTA



hour of independence

**Maurice Yaméogo,
President of the
Republic of the
Upper Volta,
President of the
Council of Ministers**



BORN in 1921 in the Upper Volta, Maurice Yaméogo began his career as a teacher after completing his secondary studies.

In 1946 he was elected to the Territorial Assembly of the Upper Volta, and then to the Grand Council of French Equatorial Africa in 1948.

An active member of the French Confederation of Christian Workers (C.F.T.C.) and vice president of that organization's territorial office in 1954, Mr. Yaméogo joined the Voltaic Democratic Union (U.D.V.), local division of the African Democratic Rally (R.D.A.), in 1958.

Minister of Agricultural Economy on the Government Council of the Upper Volta in 1957, and then Minister of the Interior in 1958, he became President of the Government Council of this Overseas Territory in July 1958.

When the Upper Volta chose the status of self-governing Republic and member State of the Community on December 11, 1958, Mr. Yaméogo became President of the Provisional Government.

Following adoption of the Constitution of the Upper Volta on February 28, 1959 and its ratification by referendum on March 15, 1959, Mr. Yaméogo became President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Information, of Justice and of War Veterans.

On December 9, 1959, the National Assembly created the post of President of the Republic of the Upper Volta, and elected Mr. Yaméogo to that office.

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AT a time when the new Republics in Africa and Madagascar are taking their place in the United Nations, the Press and Information Division of the French Embassy is pleased to present an overall picture of these countries and their peoples, to trace the principal steps in their progress toward unity and independence and to show how France has contributed to the political and economic development of these modern democratic States.

The subject of this brochure is the Republic of the Upper Volta.



Mr. Maurice Yaméogo and Mr. Louis Jacquinot
exchanging the instruments of ratification of the
independence agreements, August 4, 1960.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UPPER VOLTA

A Modern Democratic State

IN THE REFERENDUM of September 28, 1958, 99% of the voters of the Upper Volta came out in favor of the new French Constitution, which gave each of the Overseas Territories a free choice as to its future relationship with the French Republic.

On December 11, 1958, the Territorial Assembly transformed itself into the Constituent and Legislative Assembly, and on February 28, 1959, adopted the Constitution of the Upper Volta. This was finally approved by 75 per cent of the voters in a referendum held on March 15, 1959, and officially proclaimed on March 19. Thus was born the "one and indivisible" Republic of the Upper Volta, autonomous member State of the Community.

On December 13, 1959, General de Gaulle made a speech in Dakar, pointing out to members of the Community that they could acquire international sovereignty through negotiations with the French Republic, arranging for the transfer to each State of the jurisdictions of the Community. This the Upper Volta requested and, on July 11, 1960, signed with France an agreement providing for its unconditional international sovereignty and independence. The form of its future relationship with the French Republic is to be determined by subsequent negotiations.

Later in the year, on August 5, 1960, the Republic reached the final stage of its political evolution, when its complete independence was officially and solemnly proclaimed. This date happily coincided with the traditional "tree festival" held throughout the land, and so an ancient custom and a brand new political status were celebrated together with much festivity.

The Constitution

The Voltaic Constitution proclaims in its preamble adherence to the principles of democracy and human rights, as defined in the French Declaration of 1789.

Sovereignty belongs to the people, who exercise it through their representatives.

The Executive. Executive power is exercised by the President of the Council, nominated by the Legislative Assembly. He has power to designate and dismiss ministers, who are responsible to him; initiate and execute laws; appoint officials; dispose of the armed forces; negotiate agreements with foreign powers. He is responsible to the Legislative Assembly.

The first President of the Council, Mr. Maurice Yaméogo, has been in office since April 25, 1959. On December 9 of that year, the title of President of the Republic was conferred on him. His government is composed of 17 members.

Amendment of the Constitution is being studied in the Republic of the Upper Volta to make way for a presidential system of government. Under this reform, the Chief of State would be elected by direct universal suffrage and the office of minister would be incompatible with that of deputy.

The Legislature. Legislative power is exercised by the Legislative Assembly, composed of 75 deputies elected for a term of five years by direct and universal suffrage.

The Judiciary. The independence of judges, who are nominated by the President of the Council, is guaranteed by the Superior Judiciary Council. The High Court of Justice, composed of deputies chosen by the Legislative Assembly from among its membership, has power to judge the President of the Council and ministers impeached by the Assembly.

The Constitution also provides for a special council (*Conseil Juridique et du Contentieux*) empowered to pass judgment on the constitutionality of laws, and for an Economic and Social Council with purely consultative functions.

Territorial Organization. The country is divided into 37 districts (*cercles*) which in turn are subdivided, and these territorial units are headed by officials of the general and local administration.

The Council of the Entente

On April 4, 1959, a protocol was signed with the Republic of the Ivory Coast, providing for agreements of economic cooperation between the two States and for a series of provisional measures concerning the administration of the port of Abidjan, railroads, roads, the post office, telecommunications and customs. On May 29, the principles of this bilateral agreement were extended to four States, when the Republics of the Niger and Dahomey joined with the Ivory Coast and the Upper Volta to form the *Council of the Entente*, sometimes referred to as the Sahel-Benin Union.

This Council meets twice annually and is presided over in turn by each of the Chiefs of State or of Government of the four countries. The President serves for one year and is assisted by an administrative secretariat. Mr. Felix Houphouët-Boigny, of the Ivory Coast, who presided in 1959, was succeeded in 1960 by Mr. Hamani Diori, of Niger, and will be followed in 1961 by Mr. Maurice Yaméogo, of the Upper Volta.

The *Council of the Entente* has already set up a Customs Union as well as a Solidarity Fund for financial assistance to each of the member States. It has also provided for the coordination of the development plans of the four countries and of their policies in the fields of taxation, public administration, labor legislation, public works, transportation and communications.

On June 11, 1959, a convention was signed, setting up a Customs Union with free trade between these four States and the Republics of Mauritania, Senegal, and Sudan (now the Republic of Mali).

HIGHLIGHTS OF VOLTAIC HISTORY

From Feudalism to Independence

Empire Builders

THE HISTORY of the Upper Volta until the end of the nineteenth century is the story of the empire-building Mossi. Their origins are still shrouded in mystery, but most probably they came from East Africa. Sometime in the eleventh century A.D., they left their homeland, crossed the Niger, and established two small kingdoms in the Gambaga region of what is now northern Ghana. From there they spread into the Upper Volta and created feudal empires and kingdoms.

Under Ouedraogo, "The Stallion," the Mossi conquered the Tenkodogo region and later all the neighboring lands. They founded the empire of Moro Naba, whose capital was first at Tenkodogo and afterwards at Ouagadougou.

According to legend, Ouedraogo was the son of Nyennenga the Slender, daughter of the King of Gambaga, who had already begun the conquest of the Upper Volta. The old king was very attached to his beautiful daughter and took her with him on military campaigns, but neglected to find her a husband. So, during one of his campaigns, Nyennenga rode away from camp and met Riare, the hunter, whom she married in defiance of her father. They called their son Ouedraogo, "The Stallion," in memory of the horse that had brought them together.

Ouedraogo eventually became reconciled with his grandfather and succeeded him on the throne. Toward the close of his own reign he divided the country between his descendants, retaining overall suzerainty for himself. This practice was continued and one of Ouedraogo's grandsons became ruler of no less than four kingdoms—Tenkodogo, Zandoma, Oubritenga and Fada-n-Gourma.

Fada-n-Gourma broke away and became completely independent, with its own feudal structure, and later, in the fourteenth century, the empire of Yatenga arose in Zandoma. In Ouagadougou the original empire, comprising the provinces of Tenkodogo and Oubritenga, persisted down through an unbroken line of Moro Naba to modern times. It resisted the influence of Islam and all other outside pressures, preserving its ancient customs and feudal structure.

The Mossi of Yatenga, on the other hand, showed a more adventurous spirit. They fought victoriously with the empires of Manding and Songhai, and in 1333 sacked Timbuktu, which was then occupied by troops of the Emperor of Manding. In the fifteenth century they successfully resisted the Moroccans.

Progress under the French

By the time the French arrived in 1896, however, the Mossi States were tottering on the brink of dissolution. First, a protectorate was established in 1896 over the Empire of Ouagadougou, then in 1919 the provinces were united into a territory called the Upper Volta, which was made part of French West Africa.

After 1946 the political development of the country was rapid. The enabling act, or *loi cadre*, of 1956 gave the Upper Volta direct universal suffrage; on May 18, 1957, it had its first cabinet of ministers. On August 5, 1960, it reached the final goal of its political progress—Independence; and on September 20, 1960, it was admitted to the United Nations.



An avenue in Ouagadougou

THE LAND

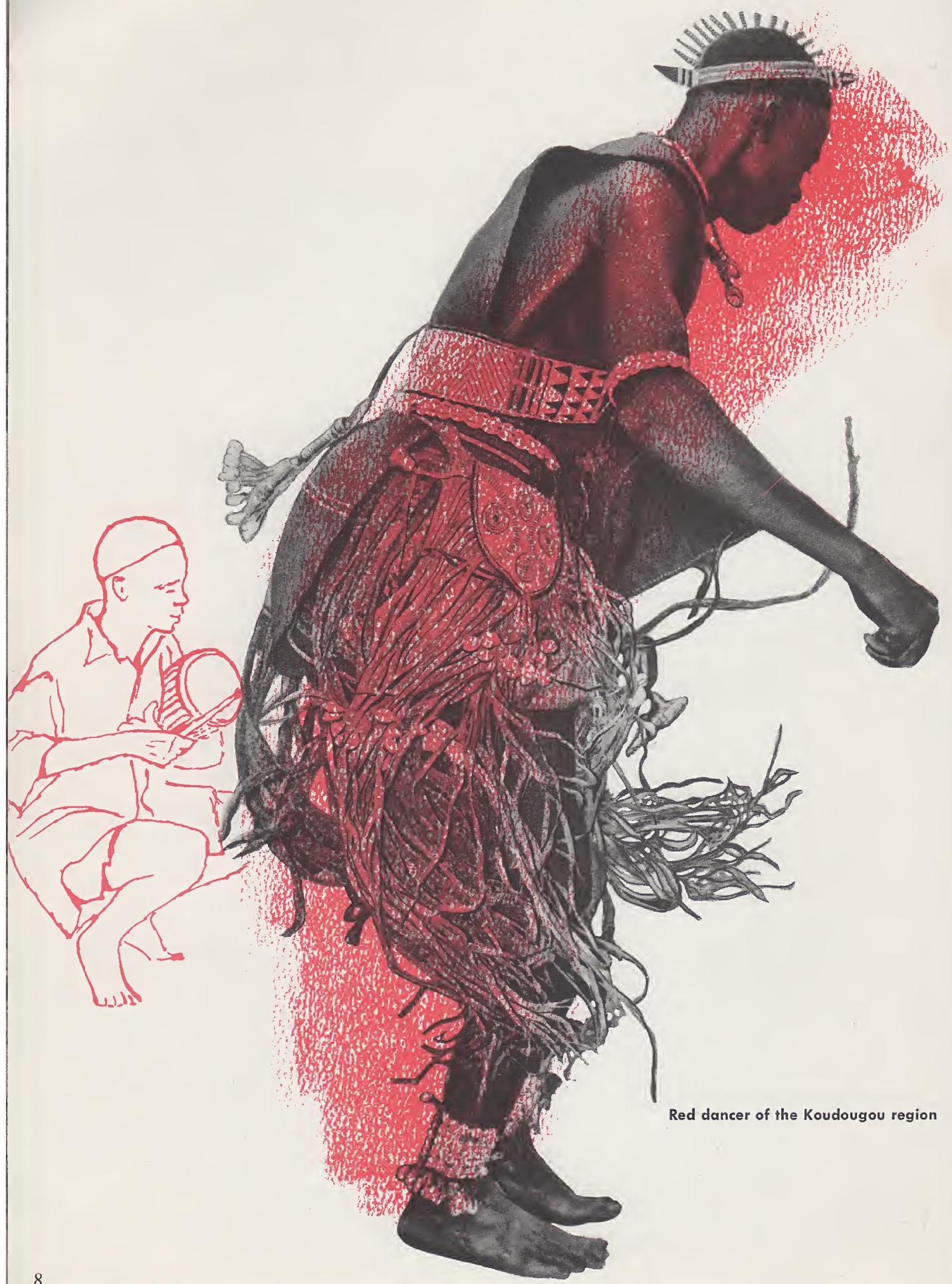
THE UPPER VOLTA, slightly larger than the State of Colorado, covers an area of 105,900 square miles in the heart of West Africa—500 miles from the Gulf of Guinea at Abidjan, more than 1,000 miles from the Atlantic Ocean at Dakar, 2,400 miles from Paris as the crow flies. Its neighbors to the south are the Republics of the Ivory Coast, Togo and Dahomey; to the east, the Republic of the Niger; to the north and west, the Republic of Mali.

Land of Contrasts—This inland republic is a land of intriguing contrasts—between the picturesque charm of wooded hills and the harsh lineaments of the desert; between park-like savanna where cattle graze and the fertility of lowland rice paddies; between the parched, brown dessication of late May when the whole land waits for rain, and the steaming dampness of summer and fall when a trickle of river swells to become a chain of lakes.

Here the tourist may travel on well-paved highways to visit game reserves where elephant and hippopotamus and antelope are seen in their primitive setting. Here airplanes crisscross the skies over semi-nomadic shepherds guarding their herds as they have done for thousands of years. Here modern office buildings in the cities contrast with the remains of ancient terraced fortifications out in the bush. Feudal emperor and French administrator, herdsman and hunter, craftsman and farmer, engineer and veterinarian, railroad builder and bush pilot, all have left their mark on this rapidly-changing land.

A Tilted Plateau—The Upper Volta is a vast wedge-shaped plateau varying in altitude from 650 to 1,000 feet, and consisting for the most part of crystalline rocks interspersed with igneous intrusions. On it the main rivers—the Leraba, the Comoe, the Black, White and Red Volta, and the Oti flow toward the Gulf of Guinea. In the east the Garoual, Sirba and Tapoa rivers drain into the Niger. None of the rivers is navigable.

The Changing Seasons—The climate of the Upper Volta is markedly seasonal—cool and dry in the winter months from November to March, hot and dry from March to May, and hot and wet the remainder of the year. Rainfall decreases steadily inland, from about 40 inches in the south to less than 10 inches in the extreme north and northeast where a hot wind from the desert, the *Harmattan*, adds to the aridity of the region.



Red dancer of the Koudougou region

Peul women of the Ouahigouya region



The Moro-Naba's drummers



Rimaibé woman



The clan is the basis of their social structure. The clans are held to originate from a common ancestor with whom they are not only linked by consanguinity, but also through a series of totemic tabus and sacrifices to the divinity protecting their land. There is a world of numerous gods and spirits, who appear in ritualistic ceremonies covered with masks. Over all reigns the supreme deity, the Wuro, who is consulted on all important family occasions and whenever strife breaks out between individuals. Young men are initiated at nocturnal firelight ceremonies within the family circle, when a secret language is used.

The **Gourounsi**, numbering some 180,000, live in the districts of Koudougou and Leo. They differ considerably in habits and characteristics from the Mossi. Individualistic and impulsive, they do not submit easily to the authority of their chiefs. Their quick intelligence has helped them to learn modern techniques and they make good artisans and skillful mechanics. They practice fetishism, but are readily converted to Christianity.

The **Lobi**, 100,000 in number, constitute the majority of the population in the districts of Gaoua and Diebougou. They are one of the most striking peoples of the Upper Volta, and their customs and way of life have evoked the keen interest of sociologists and ethnographers.

They used to live in small groups of a few families each, in terraced fortifications from which their archers could survey the surrounding countryside and, if necessary, meet the enemy with a rain of arrows. Their society is based on a clan system in which descent is counted through the women. In recent years the slow evolution of this ancient people has been speeded up through contact with the customs and institutions of neighboring lands, because they have acquired the habit, shared with other peoples of the Upper Volta, of seasonal migration.

Skillful hunters and good farmers, they are already contributing their share toward the economic development of the country.

The **Mande**, in four groups totaling some 230,000, have infiltrated among the Voltaics, but have managed to preserve their customs and characteristics. They are also to be found in Guinea, Mali, and the northern part of the Ivory Coast.

Other groups include those great travelers and merchants, the *Hausa*; some 200,000 *Peuls*, semi-nomadic shepherds, who guard the cattle of the sedentary population of the country; and the *Touaregs* of the district of Dori, who are related to the Touaregs of the Sahara and who still preserve their traditional way of life.



Mask and costume of
the Koudougou region

PUBLIC HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Public Health

GREAT PROGRESS has been made during the past 50 years in controlling two of the most dread diseases of this tropical land — smallpox and yellow fever. Thanks to extensive vaccination campaigns their incidence has been greatly reduced. The Medical Entomology Center at Bobo-Dioulasso carries on very valuable research into insect-borne disease—that great scourge of the tropics. Its efforts, which include the testing of powerful insecticides, are mainly directed against the malaria-carrying mosquito and the onchocerca, which causes blindness. Also at Bobo-Dioulasso is the Muraz Medical Center which conducts surveys throughout former French West Africa to collect scientific data on various tropical diseases.

The Public Health Service of the Upper Volta comprises general hospitals, medical centers with facilities for in-patients and maternity cases, maternity clinics, dispensaries, and mobile units for the most remote regions. In 1958: 2,013,000 persons consulted the health service; 1,965 beds accommodated 31,000 persons for a total of 246,300 days; 100,000 women visited maternity centers an average of 4 times each for pre-natal and post-natal consultation; 368,250 persons received smallpox vaccinations, 23,200 had yellow fever shots and 763,600 received a combined smallpox-yellow fever vaccination.

The new hospital at Ouagadougou is one of the most modern and completely equipped in all French-speaking West Africa. At Bobo-Dioulasso the hospital has just undergone a program of thorough modernization in every department, except the pharmaceutical laboratories, which are now being brought up to date.

Other medical facilities include: 26 medical centers; 41 maternity clinics; 144 dispensaries; a school for nurses at Ouagadougou; ophthalmological dispensaries at Ouagadougou and Nouna.

The school system is served by a doctor and a radiological unit at Ouagadougou, a doctor at Bobo-Dioulasso, and by the chief medical officers of the districts. In 1959 the school health service examined more than 40,800 pupils.



The modern hospital under construction
in Ouagadougou



Care of the sick by
Missionary White Sisters



Entrance of the high school
in Ouagadougou

Education

The first and most urgent task of educators in the Upper Volta has been to provide elementary education of high caliber to combat illiteracy effectively. During the past decade school enrollment has more than trebled. The following figures show the extent of this change in five years.

Elementary School Enrollment		
	1954	1959
Public schools	12,900	23,800
Private schools	9,250	17,150

To achieve this a great number of new buildings had to be constructed. In 1954 there were 87 public and 59 private schools; today there are 185 and 106 respectively. These are taught by 550 public school teachers and assistants and 389 private school teachers. A program of accelerated education is under way, which it is hoped will achieve full enrollment within 15 years.

Secondary and Advanced Education

- 2 high schools, with 800 pupils, at Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso
- 4 private high schools, with 500 pupils
- 4 vocational schools, with 680 pupils
- 3 teachers colleges, with an enrollment of 500, two for men, and one for women
- 1 Catholic teachers college for girls, with 82 students.

In 1959 fifty scholarships were awarded to persons who desired to pursue their studies further at French and other universities.

Labor and Social Welfare

The Upper Volta is one of the most important centers of labor migration in all Africa. Much of this migration takes place to and from the Ivory Coast and Ghana, where workers can find employment on coffee and cocoa plantations and in the cities. Within the Republic a rapidly-increasing population and expanding program of industrialization pose problems of labor supply and demand.

In 1956 a Labor Office was set up with responsibility for the distribution of the labor force, for labor market statistics, registration of workers, work permits, apprenticeship and migration control. It is managed by a council consisting of representatives of the administration, employers' groups and workers, and is under the authority of the Ministry of Labor, with headquarters at Bobo-Dioulasso and a branch office, opened in 1957, at Ouagadougou.

The growth of industry, the rise of urban centers, the pressure of change toward modern ways of living, create problems of adjustment for the individual worker and his family. To meet these difficulties, a social welfare program is carried on through five centers at Ouagadougou, of which the principal one also trains social workers, three centers at Bobo-Dioulasso, and a home for children at Orodara. In 1956 a fund was set up at Bobo-Dioulasso to handle workmen's compensation and family allowances. This office also is concerned with the prevention of occupational disease and of accidents at work, and with the implementation of a welfare program for workers' families.



THE ECONOMY

Transportation

The Mossi Railroad

FOR THE LANDLOCKED Republic of the Upper Volta, lying at the heart and the crossroads of West Africa, access to the sea and the development of adequate, modern means of transportation are of paramount importance. This is why the French Government undertook, between 1939 and 1954, the costly project of extending the railroad from Bobo-Dioulasso to Ouagadougou. With the completion of this 225-mile-long Mossi Railroad in 1954, the entire Mossi region, which is well populated, rich in food products, and possesses an industrial tradition, was for the first time given direct access to the coast, with 733 miles of continuous track ending at the new seaport of Abidjan. FIDES (Investment Fund for the Economic and Social Development of the Overseas Territories) appropriated \$16.6 million for the Mossi Railroad, out of the total of \$44.7 million granted to the Upper Volta between 1947 and 1957. The railroad, which serves the principal cities of Banfora, Bobo-Dioulasso, Koudougou, and Ouagadougou, soon began to pay dividends in the expansion of agriculture and the emergence of new industries.

Roads

Road building is a challenge in this country where new highways have speeded the mushroom-like growth of towns, and other roads—surfaced or unsurfaced—have encouraged local trade and permitted the extension of cultivated areas to regions which were formerly cut off from marketing centers.

Of a total of 10,000 miles of roads, 1,300 are well-paved highways and 5,000 dirt roads.

RAILROADS

Passenger Traffic

1956	67,000
1957	76,300
1958	123,200

Livestock Transported to Ivory Coast

	1956	1957	1958
Cattle	38,000	47,600	49,800
Sheep & goats	66,100	69,200	59,500
Hogs	2,100	2,000	2,800
Total	106,200	118,800	112,100

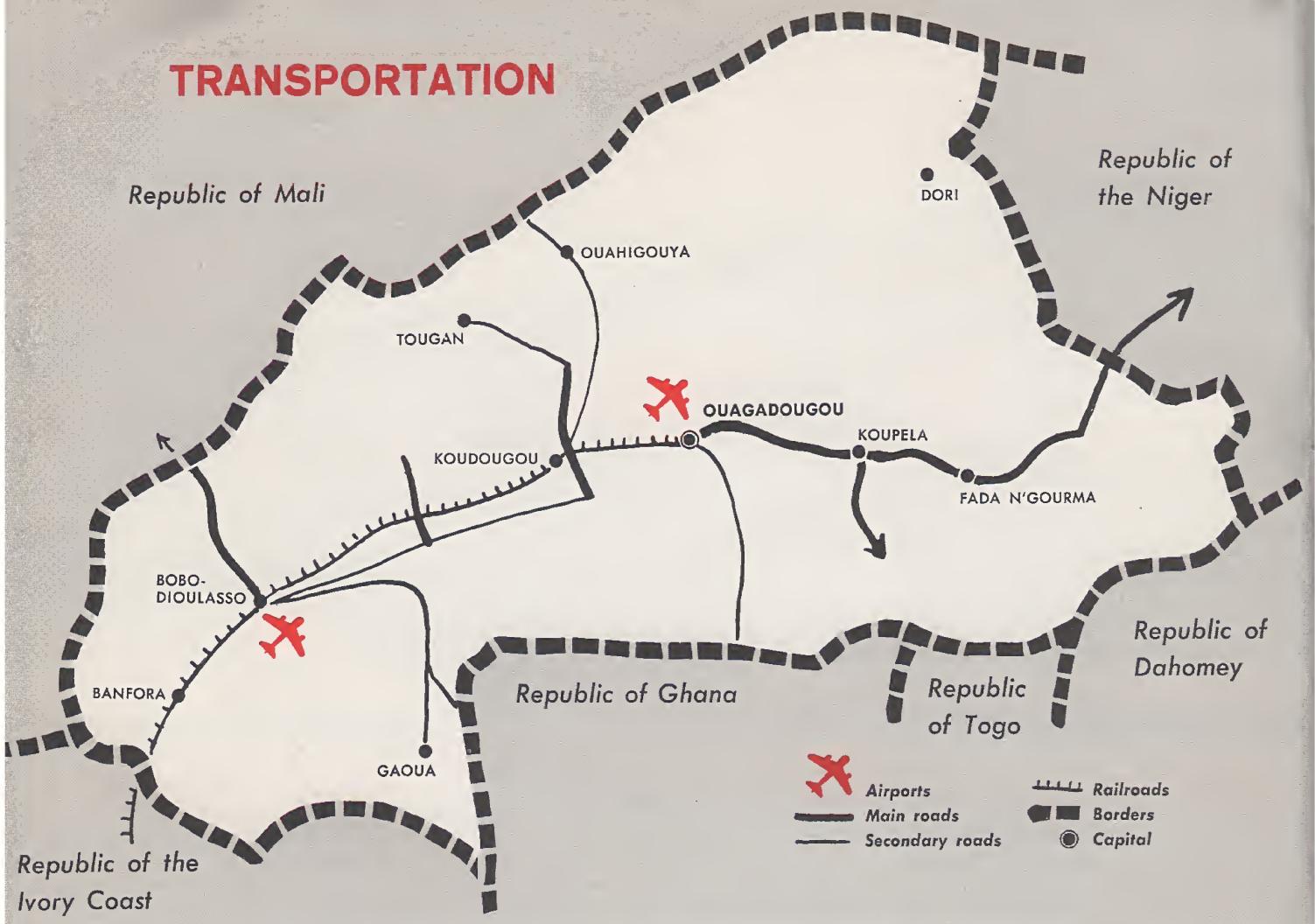
Freight Traffic (other than livestock)

	1957	1958
From Ivory Coast	78,500 tons	93,800 tons
To Ivory Coast	16,900 tons	22,600 tons

Laying the tracks on the Mossi Railroad



TRANSPORTATION



The Ouagadougou airport



Control tower at the Bobo-Dioulasso airport



Airlines

Air transportation is developing rapidly in the Upper Volta and the geography of the country lends itself particularly well to this type of travel. Two international airfields—one at Ouagadougou and the other at Bobo-Dioulasso—are served by long distance flights linking the Upper Volta with Paris, Marseille, Dakar, and Abidjan.

Some twenty-eight secondary airfields, of which twenty can be used at all seasons, serve local needs and play an increasingly important role in the transportation of passengers, medical supplies, and perishable goods to the more remote towns and villages.

Air Traffic (1958)

	Passengers	Freight (tons)	Mail (tons)
Ouagadougou	15,540	290	40
Bobo-Dioulasso	16,410	510	50

Telecommunications

The country is traversed by 2,300 miles of telegraph lines, through which 442,000 messages were transmitted in 1958. Radio has broadened the communication system and there are now nine radio stations in the Republic.

Agriculture

More than 90 per cent of the people of the Upper Volta owe their living to the soil. Many are exceedingly good farmers, but they are hampered by unproductive soil, erosion, primitive methods of agriculture, lack of water and dependence on a few subsistence crops for their whole livelihood. Since World War II the administration has undertaken vast programs to increase production by expanding the cultivable area through reclamation and by education programs conducted through agricultural research stations and experimental farms.

By soil conservation measures, construction of water storage facilities, and establishment of immunization and selective breeding centers, it has been possible to intensify livestock production and so raise the living standard of the people. The development of cash crops, too, has helped to increase the purchasing power of the Upper Volta farmer and also to improve the balance of trade.

Millet is grown on more than 1,500,000 acres in the Upper Volta





Stock raising in the north, around Dori.
Livestock is the Upper Volta's
principal resource.

Cash Crops

The principal crops being developed for the market are cotton, rice, peanuts and karite. Karite is the oily fruit of the karite, or shea tree, and is marketed either as shea nuts or as shea butter. It is the chief source of edible fat for the population and is widely used throughout West Africa. Peanuts grow well in the light, friable soils of the Upper Volta and are usually shelled before marketing. Cotton growing is expanding rapidly; the production of cottonseed for sale, which now amounts to 4,000 tons a year, is expected to rise to 10,000 tons within three to four years' time. The reclamation of 10,000 acres for rice cultivation in the Loumana, Malba, Nien and Louda plains is also a very promising development.

CROPS (1958)

	Acres	Tons
Sorghum	2,093,000	360,000
Millet	1,582,000	198,000
"Niébé"	520,000	62,000
Peanuts (in the shell)	303,000	51,000
Corn	219,000	57,000
Cottonseed	89,000	6,000
"Fonio" (variety of millet)	72,000	9,200
Rice	65,900	17,000
Root crops (cassava, sweet potatoes, taro)	65,800	52,000
Yams	14,190	25,000
Shea nuts	—	20,000



The Role of Research

The agricultural research stations at Seria, Banfora, Farako and Kamboinsé, which function together with a whole network of auxiliary centers and experimental farms, play a vital role in intensifying production, especially through the development of improved seed, soil conservation measures, and the planting of fruit trees. Another station, at Niangoloko, for research in oils and fats is making experiments to improve the quality of karite and peanuts.

On the local level six training centers have been created and 60 more are due for completion by 1963. These are conducted by agents specially chosen to assist farmers in every way by giving them advice, and teaching them how to improve their land, maintain soil fertility and use better strains of seed. Some 200 experimental farms are run by local farmers, who are supplied with all the necessary equipment.

Stock Raising

The principal wealth of the Upper Volta is in its livestock, numbering more than 1½ million head of cattle, 2½ million sheep and goats, 280,000 horses and donkeys, and 31,000 hogs. Some 740,000 animals are available for slaughter annually, yielding about 24,000 tons of meat—of which approximately 19,000 tons are consumed within the country—110,000 cattle hides, and 80,000 sheepskins and goatskins. Milk production amounts to 60,000 tons a year.

The export of animals on the hoof—70,000 head of cattle and 170,000 sheep a year—represents in value more than half the total exports of the Upper Volta. Moreover, some 80,000 head of cattle and 200,000 sheep pass yearly through the Upper Volta on their way from the producing areas of the Republics of the Niger and of Mali to the consuming areas of the Ivory Coast and Ghana. The rise in the standard of living, the rapid increase in population, and the imperative needs of the great urban centers of the Ivory Coast make it vital to increase production and improve quality.

Improving Pasture and Livestock

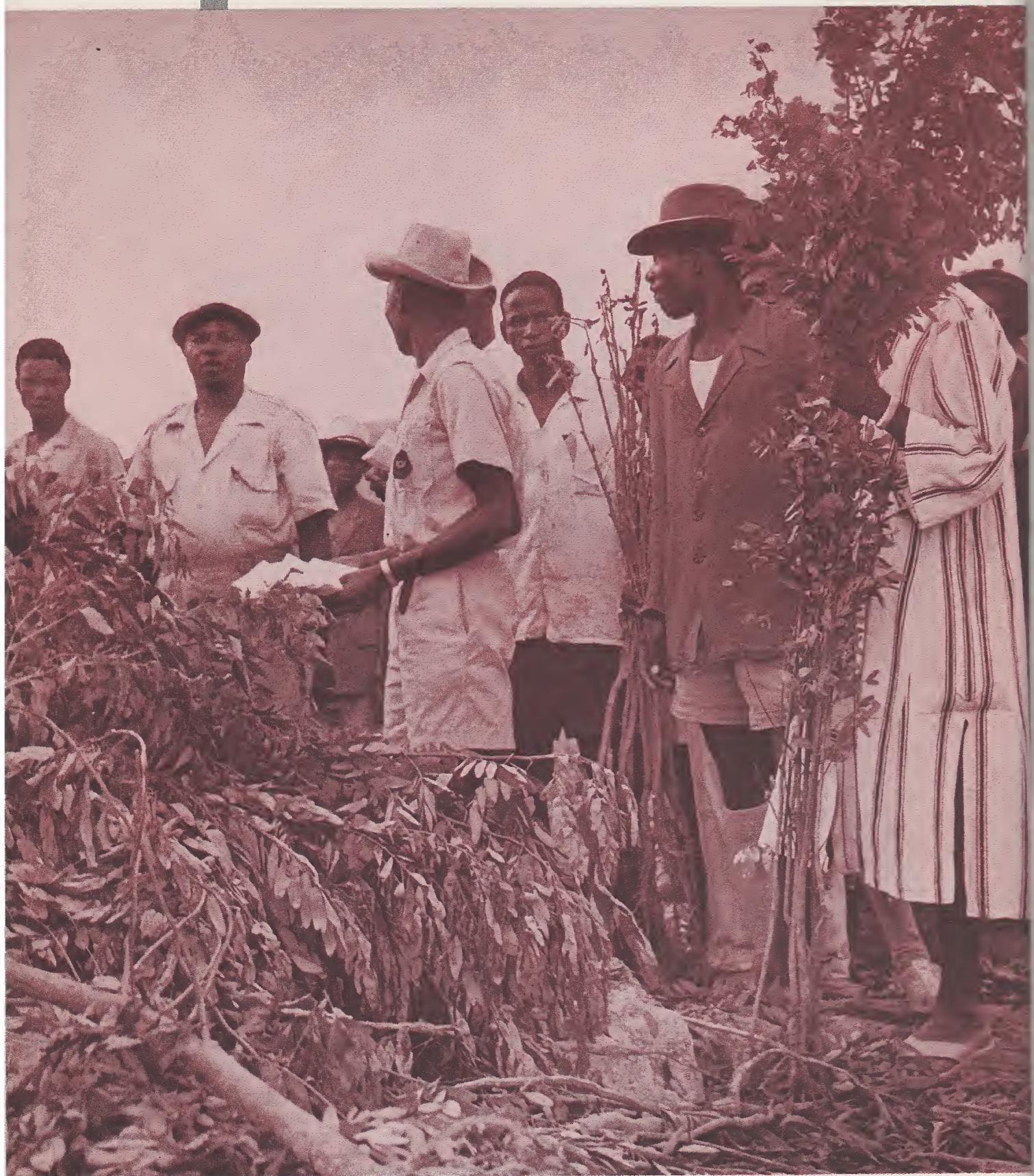
Stock raising depends more than anything else on adequate supplies of water, and the grazing capacity of a range can be markedly increased by the building of wells and dams. Appropriations in the 1953 program have enabled the Upper Volta to complete 200 wells, 7 storage dams and 7 feeder dams for this purpose. An experimental center has been created at Samadeni to study the possibilities of stock raising in regions hitherto considered unfavorable and it is estimated that 200,000 more head of cattle could be grazed in areas of good quality pasture, which so far have not been exploited for lack of water during the dry season.

It is difficult to raise pedigreed meat- and milk-producing stock in the Upper Volta at present, because they demand constant care and abundant high-quality feed. Much more can be done with hogs and poultry. An experimental farm has been set up at Banankeledega, with a capacity of 3,000 fowl and 100 sows in farrow, to encourage the spreading of improved breeds.

Veterinary service, very important in the tropics, is provided by 6 immunization centers, 6 vaccination centers, 17 veterinary posts, 1 laboratory and a veterinary school at Ouagadougou.

The Upper Volta has about
two and a half million sheep and goats.





Reforestation
program

Conservation Measures

Reclamation

The *Service du Génie Rural*, created in 1954, is dedicated to soil conservation and reclamation. Its task is to increase crop production by expanding the cultivable area and to assure a sufficient supply of water, both for the rural population and for the herds. The main targets of its operations are the valleys, which alone are capable of yielding fertile land for the irrigated cultivation of rice, cotton and truck crops.

The reclamation work completed falls into three categories: Crops—9 projects totaling 25,000 acres. Pasture—4 earth dams. Village water supply—4 earth dams.

Many more earth dams are to be constructed in the eastern part of the Republic and further reclamation work on a large scale is planned for the west.

The work of the *Génie Rural* is vitally important in the Upper Volta, where two fifths of the land is completely denuded and the remainder is in danger of becoming so, and where a population of 3½ million is expected to double within 35 years.

Reforestation

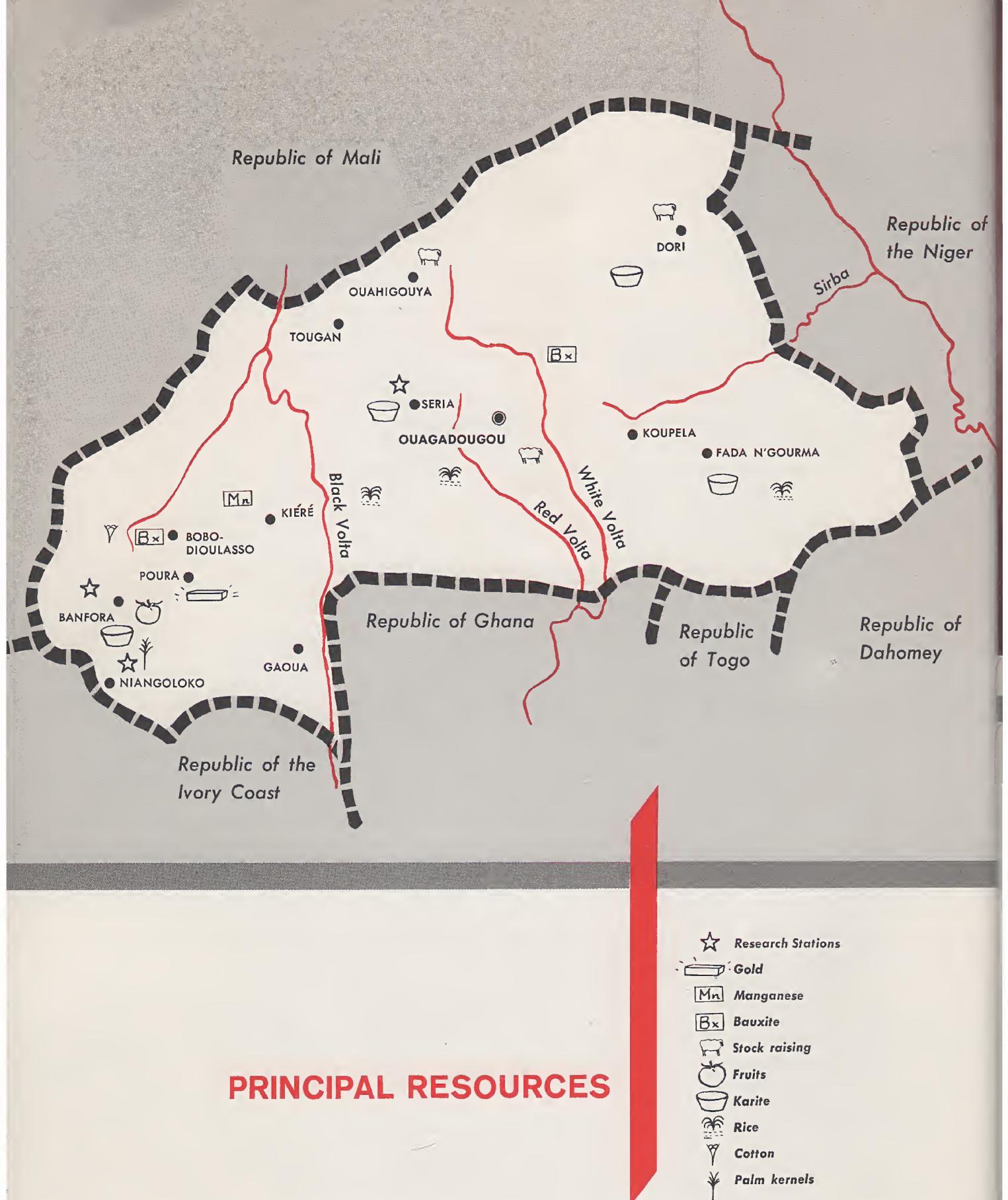
The Upper Volta has no real forests in the sense of a continuous tree cover. The virgin or primary forest was long ago cleared for cultivation and has given way to a poor type of wooded savanna, which is swept each year in the dry season by brush fires. The Forest Service aims to restore the primary forest over an area large enough to supply much needed timber and to appreciably affect the climate. For it is well known that dense tree cover helps to lower the temperature and to increase the water vapor content of the air, as well as to provide shade.

In 1959 there were more than 4,485,000 acres of forests. In part of these forests, fire breaks, which are cleared at the beginning of each dry season by tractors and bulldozers, have been constructed, but less than 40,000 acres are so protected.

Soil conservation is part of the duties of the Forest Service. In the forest reserves this is assured by reforestation, but in the cultivated land various methods are employed. Some remarkable results have been obtained over a 10,000-acre area near Ouahigouya, where surface runoff of water is checked and canalized into gently sloping drainage ditches.

Fish Farming

Despite the fact that the rivers of the western part of the Republic are well stocked with fish and that new storage reservoirs are being constructed all the time, very little fishing is done. Efforts are being made to encourage fishing by advertising the possibilities and by bringing in professional fishermen to give demonstrations. An experiment in fish farming is being conducted in the west, where more than 100 family ponds have been built. Near Banfora a fish hatchery, with 32 ponds, selects stock and is experimenting with various methods of fish farming with a view to finding the most productive species.



PRINCIPAL RESOURCES



Rug weaving is one of the principal handcrafts in Upper Volta.

Industry

Mining

The mineral resources of the Upper Volta are by no means fully exploited or even prospected, but by analogy with the neighboring areas of the Ivory Coast and Ghana, which have the same underlying geological formations, the Upper Volta offers mining potentialities.

Gold has long been mined in this region. The gold fields extend for some 60 miles around Poura, and the deposits vary in thickness from five to ten feet, with a metal content of slightly less than one ounce per ton. A pilot plant for the processing of auriferous quartz began operation in November 1957; with a capacity of 50 tons of ore a day, it has already supplied more than 70 tons of gold concentrates, of which approximately 60 tons have been exported. The annual yield is expected to be approximately 440 pounds of fine gold.

Large manganese deposits have been discovered at Kiéré, 8 miles from the railroad line. They are estimated at 700,000 tons, with a metal content of 35 per cent. Bauxite deposits occur in the Kaya region and the Bobo-Dioulasso district, and copper is found at Goundoudy, about 12 miles east of Gaoua. Prospectors have discovered traces of cassiterite near Tenkodogo and Ouagadougou, and of graphite near the Ghana frontier.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing is still in an embryonic stage and consists chiefly of the processing of fats and oils, rice polishing, cotton ginning and the production of sisal twine. Bobo-Dioulasso is the main center, with a rice mill, a plant producing shea butter, peanut and sesame oil, a cotton-ginning mill, three carpentry shops and a municipal refrigeration plant. Another rice mill is being put into operation at Banfora.

Two sisal factories in the Bobo-Dioulasso district, at Matroukou and Dafinso, almost doubled their production within five years, from 375 tons in 1953 to 640 tons in 1958. Almost all of their output goes to twine factories at Bouaka. The cotton ginning mill at Bobo-Dioulasso was established in 1956 and since then has produced more than 1,000 tons of cotton fiber and nearly 2,200 tons of cottonseed. Of this, 916 tons of fiber were exported and 922 tons of selected seed distributed. The fats and oil processing plant at Bobo-Dioulasso treated 2,600 tons of raw material in 1958, but this is well below its total capacity of 6,000 tons of finished products.



Market in Ouagadougou

There are four main construction companies, two trucking companies with sizable fleets of trucks, and six private refrigeration plants, beside the municipal one at Bobo-Dioulasso. Other miscellaneous industries include brickkilns, limekilns, machine shops and plants making carbonated water and soft drinks.

Crafts are well developed in the Upper Volta. The Catholic mission at Ouagadougou is noted for fine embroidery and also has the only printing shop in the Republic. Cotton weaving is carried on throughout the country as a cottage industry. The people prefer their traditional closely woven bands of cotton to imported fabrics; sewn together, these bands serve as clothing for most of the rural population. Other handcraft products, often of great beauty and interest, are leather goods, baskets and little bronze figurines.

Electric power is supplied to Bobo-Dioulasso and Ouagadougou by four generators — one of 550 kw, one of 504 and two of 273 each. Between 1957 and 1958 the power supplied to Bobo-Dioulasso increased from 2.2 to 2.8 million kwh, and that to Ouagadougou from 1.3 to 1.9 million kwh.



The Upper Volta is noted for many handcraft products such as these small bronze figurines.

Covered market in Ouagadougou



Customhouse in Ouagadougou



Foreign Trade

Strenuous efforts are being made to increase the volume and value of exports so as to close the present unfavorable balance of trade, which results from a rapidly growing population and a steady rise in the standard of living.

Statistics give a very incomplete picture of the country's external trade because they take account only of goods declared for customs. A great deal of merchandise imported by the Ivory Coast ultimately reaches the Upper Volta without further customs inspection while many Upper Volta products are counted among exports of the Ivory Coast. Moreover, a vast quantity of goods in transit between Mali and Niger on the one hand, and Ghana and the Ivory Coast on the other, passes through the Upper Volta along five major traffic routes.

The chief exports of the Upper Volta are bulk products—livestock on the hoof, fish, peanuts and sesame seed. The main imports are vegetables and fruits, sugar, cotton and other fabrics, and manufactured goods of all kinds from motorcycles to precision instruments. Ghana takes the lion's share of the country's exports, and is also the second largest source of imports after France.

1958 IMPORTS (by area)

	Tons	Value*
Franc Area	7,450	\$5,706,400
Sterling Area	6,900	2,139,700
Dollar Area	370	117,700
Others	2,020	500,500
Total	16,740	\$8,464,300

1958 EXPORTS (by area)

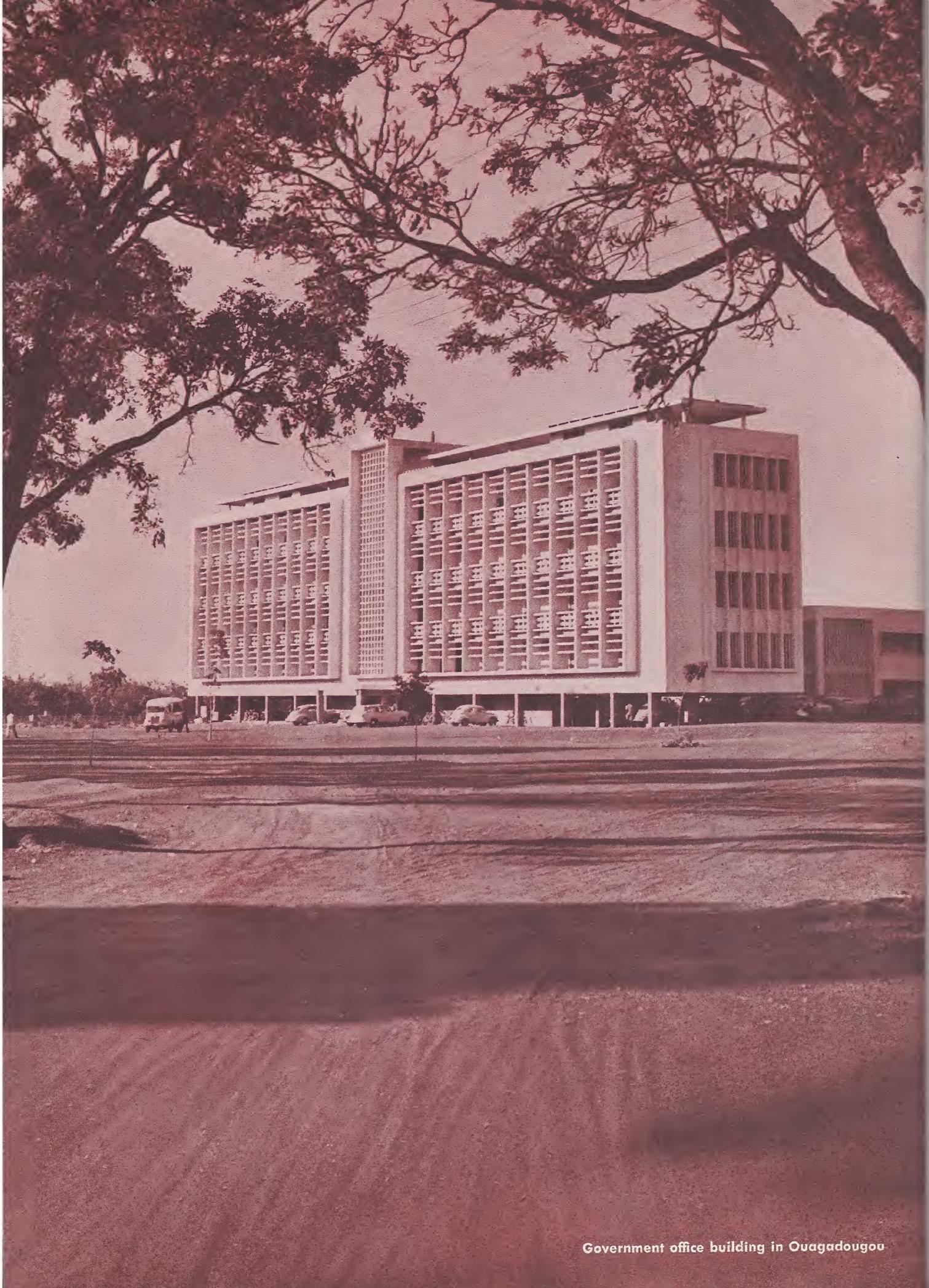
	Tons	Value*
Franc Area	4,950	\$1,020,000
Sterling Area	31,720	4,163,000
Dollar Area	20	3,000
Others	1,590	200,000
Total	38,280	\$5,386,000

PRINCIPAL EXPORTS

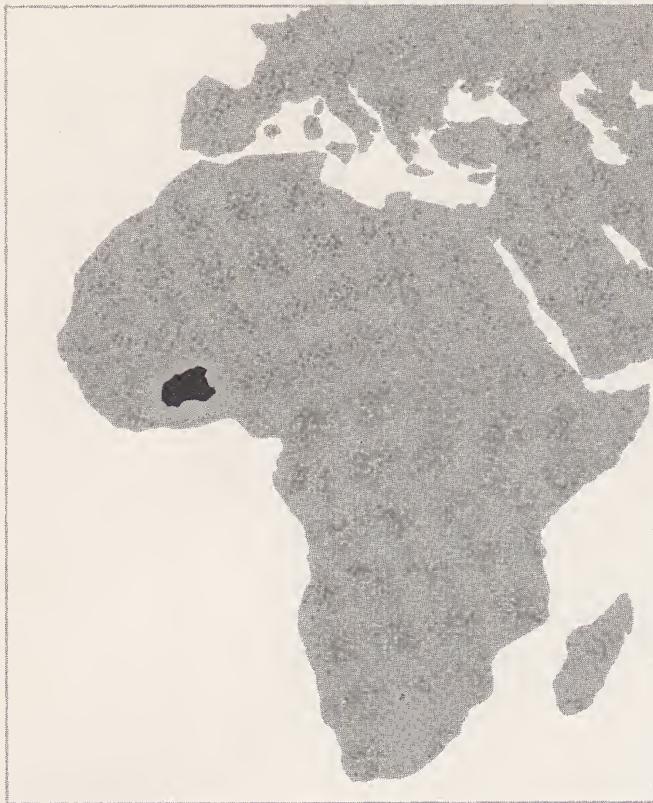
(1958 figures)

	Tons	Value*
Livestock on the hoof	24,720	\$2,839,000
Fish (dried, salted and smoked)	4,310	1,027,000
Cotton, ginned	920	506,000
Peanuts, shelled	3,290	396,000
Shea nuts and butter	980	179,000
Sesame seed	870	166,000
Other products	3,190	273,000
Total	38,280	\$5,386,000

*Converted at the 1958 rate of exchange.



Government office building in Ouagadougou



“*IT IS INTO a world long seen from the perspective of another dimension that the young African nations are making their entrance today as full partners; but if history makes them belated Wise Men, the gifts that they bring to the cradle of the new world are no less costly, for they are made of age-old wisdom and the will to construct. Their dynamism, long buried within, will be devoted to the reconciliation of the worlds in behalf of the only worthwhile cause—that of man himself. . . .*

“Africa, land of age-old wisdom, must, on the contrary, bring to the world the new dimension which, up to now, has been lacking and has kept it from finding its equilibrium; the source of this contribution is in its traditions of brotherhood, of solidarity and, also, in the depths of its philosophy conceived on the scale of man. The age-old wisdom to which I refer will hold surprises in store; all that remains is to allow time to do its work.”

President Maurice Yaméogo
(On Upper Volta's Independence Day, August 5, 1960)



Mosque in Ouagadougou

The Ouagadougou Cathedral

Bobo dance mask